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p 3

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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SHIPMENTS OF PACKAGE BEES IN 1947

A total of 1,375,000 pounds of package bees were shipped in 1947 -- 6 percent more than in 1946 -- according to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Reports from package bee shippers indicate that they expect their 1948 shipments to be about 4 percent more than in 1947. In January, these shippers had orders for 64 percent of their production compared with 79 percent a year earlier. Demand is below last year, mainly because of cautious buying which in turn was brought about by slow movement and lower prices of honey. Shippers expect the demand to improve after the extent of losses from the hard winter in Northern States can be determined. Queens shipped by package bee shippers in 1947 totaled 1,007,200 -- 6 percent more than in 1946. Reports from Texas shippers report a heavy demand for queens.

Colonies generally are in excellent condition, have ample stores, and give promise of high production of bees per colony. In California, bees in the important Sacramento Valley Section are in good condition with a good early production of young bees, but in the Southern San Joaquin Valley counties bees are in poor condition because dry fields have produced no pollen yielding plants.

The total number of packages shipped in 1947 was 538,651 compared with 504,520 in 1946. The increase in package bee shipments consisted mainly of 2-pound packages. Of the total pounds of bees shipped in 1947, about 40.1 percent moved in 2-pound packages, 54.1 percent in 3-pound, 3.6 percent in 4-pound and 1.0 percent in 5-pound packages. Bees shipped in units other than those mentioned above accounted for a little over 1 percent of total shipments.

Colonies held for the production of package bees in 1947 totaled 242,700 -- 4 percent more than in 1946. An average of 5.7 bees per colony were shipped in 1947 compared to 5.6 pounds in 1946. Production of bees per colony in Georgia was 7.6 pounds, Louisiana 7.3 pounds, Mississippi 6.9 pounds, Alabama 6.5 pounds, California 3.9 pounds and Texas 2.9 pounds. The low averages per colony in Texas and California are due to the practice of making a light shaking of bees for packages, and leaving the colonies in shape to build up and produce a honey crop later in the season. The average number of pounds of bees shipped per colony in Georgia and Mississippi in 1947 was well below 1946. The increase in total pounds shipped from Mississippi in 1947 was due to a sharp increase in number of colonies.

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PACKAGE BEES - Number of Packages and Total Pounds of Bees Shipped in 1946 and 1947

States	Number of packages - 1947					Total	Other units		Total Pounds
	2-lb.	3-lb.	4-lb.	5-lb.	Total		1946	1947	
Georgia	31,273	52,950	4,841	248	89,312	0	259,000	242,000	
Alabama	63,009	43,721	2,371	867	109,968	0	263,000	271,000	
Mississippi	33,396	21,390	897	690	56,373	0	120,000	138,000	
Louisiana	37,058	52,397	2,308	492	92,255	0	206,000	243,000	
Texas	18,287	20,027	320	213	38,847	2,000	97,000	101,000	
California	75,323	31,251	750	0	107,324	2,600	238,000	250,000	
Other States	17,306	26,101	1,041	124	44,572	12,300	117,000	130,000	
U. S. (1947)	275,652	247,837	12,528	2,634	538,651	16,900	- - -	1,375,000	
U. S. (1946)	245,517	244,256	10,549	4,198	504,520	13,014	1,300,000	- - -	

States	Package Bees and Queen Bee Shipments - 1947					Queens shipped	Number	
	Colonies held in 1947 for production of package bees	Bees shipped per colony	Expected 1948 bee shipments	Advance orders on hand Jan. 15 as percent of expected production			1946	1947
Georgia	31,800	7.6	237,000	60		Number	140,300	141,700
Alabama	41,700	6.5	295,000	59		Number	202,800	227,100
Mississippi	20,000	6.9	160,000	65		Number	101,000	103,000
Louisiana	33,300	7.3	245,000	60		Number	170,000	188,700
Texas	34,800	2.9	106,000	76		Number	95,000	100,700
California	64,100	3.9	235,000	69		Number	181,000	186,400
Other States	17,000	7.0	130,000	73		Number	59,200	59,600
United States	242,700	5.7	1,408,000	64		Number	949,300	1,007,200